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基于翻译写作过程的汉英翻译能力研究

A Study of Chinese-English Translation Competence from
the Perspective of Translational Writing Process

刘 丹

指导教师姓名: 杨士焯教授

专 业 名 称: 英语语言文学

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Abstract

Chinese translators doing Chinese-English translation is a very common and important activity in present China. Translating from mother tongue to non-mother tongue, however, is quite different from translating from non-mother tongue to mother tongue. To ensure a high quality of Chinese-English translation, Chinese translators should improve their translation competence. The aim of this thesis is to explore the constituents of Chinese-English translation competence so that it can provide translators or translator-training program with guidance on how to improve translators' Chinese-English translation competence.

With the development of technology and translation profession itself, the translation models proposed by scholars tend to include more and more components and become too complicated for translators to improve on each of the sub-competence. Therefore, this thesis studies translation competence on the basis of translation process itself to work out a more applicable model of Chinese-English translation competence.

The thesis is composed of five parts.

Chapter One introduces the background, objectives and structure of this thesis.

Chapter Two reviews the previous research of translation competence. Focuses are on the reviewing of the two types of translation competence models: multi-component models and “super-competence” models. In addition, the author compares two routes to study translation competence: the process-oriented approach and the product-oriented approach. Through the above literature review, the author concludes that taking the process-oriented approach to build a multi-component model is the best way to study Chinese-English translation competence.

Chapter Three elaborates on the process model of translational writing, which is the basis of this research. Each stage of translational writing process is introduced, including perception, thought operation, expression and inspection.

Chapter Four is the core of this thesis. Based on the analysis of the four stages of translational writing, the translation competences needed at each stage are explored. During the process of perception, the translator should have a thorough understanding of the content, form and style of the source text; therefore, Chinese reading competence is necessary. In this thesis, the author proposes the definition and constituents of Chinese reading competence based on Zeng Xiangqin's Chinese Reading Theory. At the stage of thought operation, the translator should operate the information obtained from the source text in the target culture. Therefore, cultural competence is required. The components of cultural competence are mainly borrowed from Ma Huijuan's analysis, adding to it the competence to choose appropriate genre for the target text due to the close relation between culture and genre. As for expression, the translator should be able to express the source text in an idiomatic way, so English proficiency is of great importance. These three competences constitute the Chinese-English translation competence.

Chapter Five concludes the research results of this thesis, its significance and limitations and my suggestions for further research.

Key Words: Chinese-English Translation Competence; Chinese Reading Competence; Cultural Competence; English Proficiency; Translational Writing Process

摘 要

目前,中国译者的汉英翻译质量不容乐观,因此提高中国译者的汉英翻译能力是一项非常紧迫的工作。中国译者进行汉英翻译是从母语译入非母语,这与国际翻译界认可的从非母语译入母语有很大的区别。然而,国内外针对汉英翻译能力的研究还比较少。因此,本文意在研究中国译者所需的汉英翻译能力。

由于科技和翻译职业的发展,许多学者的翻译能力模式包含的成分越来越多,这不利于为提高译者翻译能力提供指导和借鉴。本文回归翻译过程本身,以翻译写作过程为基础,分析翻译写作过程中的每个步骤对译者能力的要求。通过对翻译过程本身的分析所得出的汉英翻译能力是译者最核心的能力,能够为翻译实践提供指导。

本文由五个部分组成。

第一章介绍了本文的写作背景、研究目的以及论文结构。

第二章对翻译能力研究进行了文献综述。重点介绍和评价了两种翻译能力模式:多成分翻译能力模式以及单一成分翻译能力(“超级能力”)模式。另外,本章还对翻译能力研究的两种主要途径进行了比较——以过程为中心的研究途径和以作品为中心的研究途径。通过文献综述,笔者认为采取以过程为中心的翻译能力研究途径,建立翻译能力的多成分模式是研究翻译能力的最好方式。

第三章详细介绍了本研究的基础,即翻译写作过程。本章对翻译写作的每个步骤——感知、运思、表述、检视——都进行了详细介绍和分析。

第四章是本文的核心。本章探究了翻译写作每个步骤所需的主要能力。在汉译英的感知阶段,译者需要对原文的内容、形式、风格等有充分的把握,这就要求汉英翻译的译者有足够的汉语阅读能力,因此,笔者以曾祥芹对汉文阅读能力的分析为基础,提出了译者所需的汉语阅读能力的定义和内涵。运思阶段是译者运用目标语对原文的信息进行思维的过程,笔者认为这一过程是将信息从一种文化“运输”到另一种文化中的过程,因此,最重要的是文化能力;至于文化能力的构成,本文借用了马会娟的文化能力构成分析,并在此基础上增加了辨识与选择

语体的能力，使译者文化能力的内涵更加充实。在汉译英的表述阶段，中国译者需要用外语（即英语）地道地表达，英语语言能力至关重要；而在检视阶段，则须译者能够综合运用以上三种能力。汉语阅读能力、文化能力和英语语言能力构成了本文所提出的汉英翻译能力。

第五章总结了本文的主要研究成果和意义，指出不足之处，并对进一步研究提出了建议。

关键词 汉英翻译能力 汉语阅读能力 文化能力 英语语言能力 翻译写作过程

Table of Contents

Abstract	I
摘 要	III
Table of Contents	V
目 录	VII
Chapter One Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research Background and Objectives.....	1
1.2 The Structure of this Thesis	4
Chapter Two Literature Review on Translation Competence	5
2.1 The Denomination and Definition of Translation Competence.....	5
2.2 The Study of Translation Competence from Bilingualism.....	7
2.3 Multi-component Models of Translation Competence v.s. “Super-competence”	7
2.3.1 Multi-component Models of Translation Competence	7
2.3.2 The Research into “Super-competence”	12
2.4 Two Routes to Study Translation Competence – Process-oriented v.s. Product-oriented.....	12
2.5 The Study of C-E Translation Competence.....	16
2.6 Comment on the Study of Translation Competence both at Home and Abroad.....	18
2.6.1 Multi-component Model or Super-competence	18
2.6.2 Process-oriented or Product-oriented	19
Chapter Three Translational Writing Process	20
3.1 Translational Writing Theory.....	20
3.1.1 The Establishment of the Theory.....	20
3.1.2 Further Researches into the Theory	22
3.2 The Process Model	24
3.2.1 The Grounded Theory of the Process Model	24

3.2.2 The Process Model of Translational Writing	26
Chapter Four Chinese-English Translation Competence from the Perspective of Translational Writing Process	33
4.1 Chinese Reading Competence.....	33
4.1.1 Reading Identification Competence	42
4.1.2 Reading Comprehension Competence	49
4.1.3 Reading Evaluation and Appreciation Competence.....	53
4.1.4 Summary	55
4.2 Cultural Competence.....	56
4.2.1 Omitting Some Information to Fit into the Target Culture.....	58
4.2.2 Adding Something to Fully Deliver the Meaning of Source Texts.....	60
4.2.3 Changing Something to Make Target Texts More Acceptable	62
4.2.4 Choosing Appropriate Genre in the Target Culture	64
4.2.5 Summary	67
4.3 English Proficiency	67
4.3.1 Using Proper Collocations	68
4.3.2 Writing Correct and Idiomatic Sentences	71
4.3.3 Writing the Target Texts in a Cohesive and Coherent Way	73
4.3.4 Summary	75
4.4 The Combination of Chinese Reading Competence, Cultural Competence and English Proficiency.....	75
Chapter Five Conclusion	77
5.1 Major Research Results	77
5.2 Significance of this Thesis	77
5.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research.....	78
References	79
Acknowledgements	84

目 录

Abstract	I
摘 要	3
Table of Contents	5
目 录	7
第一章 引言	1
1.1 研究背景及目标	1
1.2 本文结构	4
第二章 翻译能力研究文献综述	5
2.1 翻译能力定义	5
2.2 从双语能力角度进行的翻译能力研究	7
2.3 多成分翻译能力模式 v.s. 单一成分翻译能力模式	7
2.3.1 多成分翻译能力模式	7
2.3.2 单一成分翻译能力模式	12
2.4 翻译能力研究的两种模式 —— 过程中心 v.s. 作品中心	12
2.5 汉英翻译能力研究综述	16
2.6 对国内外翻译能力研究的评价	18
2.6.1 多成分模式还是单一成分模式	18
2.6.2 过程中心研究法还是作品中心研究法	19
第三章 翻译写作过程	20
3.1 翻译写作学简介	20
3.1.1 翻译写作学的建立	20
3.1.2 翻译写作学相关研究	22
3.2 翻译写作过程模式	24
3.2.1 翻译写作过程的理论基础	24

3.2.2 翻译写作过程分析	26
第四章 翻译写作过程视角下的汉英翻译能力	33
4.1 汉语阅读能力.....	33
4.1.1 阅读识别力.....	42
4.1.2 阅读理解力.....	49
4.1.3 阅读鉴赏力.....	53
4.1.4 总结	55
4.2 文化能力	56
4.2.1 以目标语文化为标准, 适当减少原文信息	58
4.2.2 为充分表达原文, 适当增加部分信息.....	60
4.2.3 适当改变原文, 增加译文在目标语文化中的可接受性.....	62
4.2.4 选择适合目标语文化的语体	64
4.2.5 总结	67
4.3 英语语言能力.....	67
4.3.1 正确使用搭配	68
4.3.2 写出地道的句子	71
4.3.3 把握语篇连贯衔接.....	73
4.3.4 总结	75
4.4 综合运用汉语阅读能力、文化能力和英语语言能力.....	75
第五章 结论	77
5.1 主要研究成果.....	77
5.2 研究意义.....	77
5.3 不足之处及进一步研究建议.....	78
参考书目	79
致谢.....	84

Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Objectives

Over the past few decades, China has been developing rapidly and playing an increasingly important role in the world. In order to communicate and cooperate with the rest of the world, China has been trying hard to be better known to the other countries. One effective way for China to engage in the global business is translation. In the past, especially the 60 or so years after the May 4th movement in 1919, Chinese translators mainly translated foreign works into Chinese to learn from the West, which undeniably accelerated the development of China. However, it also had some side effects; for example, Chinese cultural tradition was thus neglected. With the rise of new China, more emphasis has been put on introducing China to the world, therefore, translation from Chinese to foreign languages, especially to English, has become more common and more in demand in recent years. The government has its political, legal and economic documents translated to show its stance in the international community; companies have their profiles and introductions of products translated to cater for their customers overseas; and local governments have introductions of tourist attractions translated to appeal to foreign visitors. In addition, more Chinese literary works and classics are being translated to uphold Chinese cultural tradition.

These translation activities are both necessary and significant, but most of the translations from Chinese to English are done by Chinese translators, which is against the “principle” of the Western translation community that translations should be done from translators’ non-mother tongue into their mother tongue. People who hold the principle argue that one can not acquire a foreign language proficient enough to write or speak as a native, so the quality of translations from one’s mother tongue into a foreign language can not be ensured. However, as English has become a lingua franca in the 21st century, in countries where its language is less widely spoken, like China,

translation into non-mother tongue is a must. Translating Chinese classics and texts into English is a more efficient way to introduce China to the world than waiting for English-speaking natives to translate Chinese texts.

Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that the quality of most Chinese-English (C-E) translations still needs to be improved as “translationese is widely seen in many translations” (Huang Wei, 2012). For students who have learnt English for many years and have some translation training, their “performance in translation is still far from satisfactory. There are many Chinglish expressions in their translation.” (Li Qiongfang, 2009) Therefore, to improve Chinese translators’ translation competence from Chinese into English is an urgent task.

However, though not a few scholars home and abroad have studied translation competence, translation competence needed in C-E Translation has scarcely been their subject. Scholars conducted researches into translation competence from different perspectives with different aims. Some scholars researched into the definition and constituents of translation competence; some explored the developing of translation competence; and some tried to find out the pedagogy of translation competence and how to develop relevant textbooks for translation learners. Despite these researches, there is still no consensus in the definition of translation competence and its constituents. Chinese scholars tended to summarize their understanding of translation competence through their practical translating experience; and researchers abroad proposed models of translation competence on the basis of empirical studies. As for C-E translation competence, Ma Huijuan (马会娟), in her book *A Study of Translation Competence from Chinese into English* (2013), proposed a model of Chinese-English translation competence based on the translation competence model built by PACTE; in addition, Yang Xiaorong (杨晓荣, 2002) also researched into C-E translation competence. Apart from these studies, few have specialized in the research of C-E translation competence though some may touch upon this topic.

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